

Message Text

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13-12

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SUBJ: BACKGROUND INFO ON ROMANIAN ENERGY PROGRAM

REF: 75 STATE 289786, BUCHAREST A-5

1. SUMMARY. GOR ENERGY POLICY PLACES INCREASED EMPHASIS ON COAL AS A POWER SOURCE. WANTING TO CONSERVE ITS HIGH GRADE CRUDE FOR REFINED PRODUCTS AND FOR ITS GROWING PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRY, GOR'S ENERGY R&D PROGRAM STRESSES SQUEEZING THE LAST KWH OUT OF ITS LIGNITE BURNING CENTERS, FINDING NEW SOURCES OF POWER, AND INTRODUCTION OF NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAM. END SUMMARY.

2. ROMANIA HAS WORKED OUT A LONG-RANGE PLAN FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT COVERING THE PERIOD 1976-1990 (2000), INCLUDED IN WHICH ARE SEVERAL "TASKS OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE". THESE TASKS (PRIORITIES), AND THE PLAN ITSELF, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ARE SKETCHED IN GENERAL TERMS IN PUBLISHED SOURCES. OFFICIALS

HERE ARE RESTRAINED IN VOLUNTEERING MORE DETAILS BECAUSE OF CONSTRAINTS UNDER STATE SECRETS LEGISLATION. FOLLOWING IS EMBASSY'S RESPONSE TO PARTS OF STATE 289786 DEALING WITH GOR ENERGY POLICY AND R&D PRIORITIES. RESPONSES TO OTHER PARTS WILL FOLLOW SEPTEL. FOR COUNTRY BACKGROUND AND OVERALL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE, PLEASE SEE DEPARTMENT BACKGROUND NOTES ON ROMANIA.

3. EMERGY BUREAUCRACY. CONCURRENTLY THE MINISTRY OF MINES, PETROLEUM, AND GEOLOGY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR DISCOVERY AND EXPLOITATION OF NEW ENERGY RESOURCES (DEEP DRILLING AND OFF-SHORE DRILLING FOR PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS, AND SECONDARY RECOVERY); THE STATE COMMITTEE FOR NUCLEAR ENERGY FOR THE NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAM; AND THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR ESTABLISHING AND ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH PARTY AND STATE S&T POLICY.

4. ENERGY POLICY. THE ROMANIAN PETROLEUM INDUSTRY, THE OLDEST IN EUROPE, POSSESSES SUFFICIENT SURPLUS REFINING CAPACITY (BEYOND ITS OWN DOMESTIC EXTRACTION AND DOMESTIC NEEDS FOR REFINED PETROLEUM PRODUCTS AND PROCESSED PETROCHEMICALS) TO SUSTAIN IMPORTS OF AROUND 6 MILLION TONS OF CRUDE AND EXPORTS IN EXCESS OF 6 MILLION TONS OF REFINED AND PROCESSED PRODUCTS PER YEAT. DOMESTICALLY EXTRACTED ROMANIAN CRUDE OIL, HIGH GRADE AND LOW IN SULPHUR CONTENT, SUGGESTS OTHER USES (SUCH AS PETROCHEMICALS) RATHER THAN BURNING IT FOR HEAT AND ELECTRICITY. CONSEQUENTLY, GOR IS PHASING OUT ITS OIL BURNING POWER STATIONS AND INVESTING HEAVILY IN COAL AS A POWER SOURCE. IN 1976-1980 GOR IS STRESSING VIGOROUS DEVELOPMENT OF NEW CAPACITY FOR PRDUCTION OF ELECTRICITY THROUGH THE BURNING OF LOW-GRADE COAL AND GREATER R&D EFFORTS TO MAKE EFFICIENT USE OF DOMESTIC LIGNITE DEPOSITS. THIS FIVE YEAR PLAN WILL ALSO SEE THE FORMAL INTRODUCTION OF A NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAM. WITHING THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRICAL POWER ITSELF, PRIORITIES ARE ALIGNED AS: REDUCED HYDROCARBON CONSUMPTION IN THERMAL POWER PLANTS (INCREASED FUEL EFFICIENCY; GREATER UTILIZATION OF BITUMINOUS SHALES, CONVERSION FROM OIL TO COAL THERMAL PLANTS); TOTAL EXPLOITATION OF HYDRO-ELECTRIC POTENTIAL; OPTIMIZED AUTOMATIC CONTROL NETWORKS; IMPROVED TRANSMISSION EFFICIENCY; INSTALLATION OF FIRST NUCLEAR PLANT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NEW ENERGY SOURCES (GEOTHERMAL, SOLAR, WIND); AND SAFETY ENGINEERING.

5. R&D PRIORITIES. IN LOGICAL CONSONANCE WITH ENERGY POLICY, GOR R&D ENERGY PRIORITIES BREAK DOWN IN APPLIED FIELDS BY THE RESPECTIVE INDUSTRIES, BUT THE OVERALL NATIONAL PRIORITIES SEEM TO BE:

A. INTENSIFIED EXPLORATION AND EXTRACTION OF COAL-BEARING DEPOSITS;

B. INTENSIFIED CONSTRUCTION OF HYDROELECTRIC STATIONS WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF HARNESSING THE ENTIRE HYDROELECTRIC POTENTIAL OF THE COUNTRY BY 1980;

C. ENERGY CONSERVATION THROUGH INTRODUCTION OF NEW OR IMPROVED TECHNOLOGIES. IN POWER GENERATION THIS PARTICULARLY INVOLVES THERMAL POWER PLANTS ESPECIALLY DESIGNED FOR SLURRY, LIGNITE, AND BITUMINOUS SHALES. PRODUCTION OF LIGNITE AND BROWN COAL IS PLANNED TO INCREASE 1.9 TIMES BY 1980;

D. CONSTRUCTION OF FIRST NUCLEAR POWER PLANT (SOVIET "NOVORONEZH" 440MW). GOR GENERALLY FAVORS NATURAL URANIUM/HEAVYWATER REACTORS OF THE TYPE REPRESENTED BY THE CANADIAN "CANDU", AND ANTICIPATES ABOUT 6000MW INSTALLED NUCLEAR POWER BY THE END OF THIS CENTURY.
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